

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) announced today that the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) has received a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor for their Juvenile Offenders Building Skills (JOBS) project. The project, which is a collaboration between CSM and more than 30 strategic partners from all three Southern Maryland counties, will provide 96 young adults who have been involved in the juvenile justice system with a variety of community service projects and skills training needed to be placed in high-demand occupations of Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) and plumbing.

“I’m pleased the College of Southern Maryland has received this critical funding so that we can intervene to keep juvenile offenders from reoffending and help reconnect them with their community,” **stated Congressman Hoyer**. “This project will help ensure these young adults have the education and skills needed to be successful, as well as benefit our community and help local businesses grow and expand as they hire trained workers.”

“What excites me about this project is that it is not just about College of Southern Maryland, it is CSM, government agencies, social service organizations, and others working collaboratively to address a major problem in our society,” **stated Dr. Bradley Gottfried, President of CSM**. “It’s a vicious cycle of getting into trouble for some of these young people, and by working together we can help break that cycle and move these individuals into productive lives. These are funds that will truly help society and together we are building a model program that will be emulated in other communities.”

The program will serve four cohorts comprised of 24 participants each, who will participate in six months of full-time program activities. JOBS participants will enter HVAC or plumbing technician skills training and work on a variety of service-learning projects, which will benefit the community and provide opportunities for participants to practice their skills. GED classes will be provided for participants who lack a high school diploma, and participants will also receive employability training and develop job search skills. Upon completion, participants will be placed in HVAC or plumbing occupations, and receive three months of follow-up services.